United Nations A/69/281

General Assembly

Distr.: General
7 August 2014

Original: English

Sixty-ninth session
Item 117 of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the commemoration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade

Programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/7, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report on continued action to implement the programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery and the steps taken to enhance world public awareness of the commemorative activities and the permanent memorial initiative.

The theme of the commemoration in 2014, "Victory over slavery: Haiti and beyond", paid tribute to the fight against slavery in nations around the world. Haiti was the first nation to become independent as a result of the struggle of enslaved men and women, led by Toussaint Louverture. It is 210 years since the Republic of Haiti was established on 1 January 1804. Working in close collaboration with States members of the Caribbean Community and the African Union, the Department of Public Information organized a series of activities, which started on 24 January and continued throughout the year, including the official observance of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade on 25 March 2014; a film festival on slavery; and an exhibition. The twentieth anniversary of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Slave Route Project provided another opportunity to organize educational and commemorative events related to slavery.

* A/69/150.

14-58874 (E) 210814

Please recycle

The Department of Public Information mobilized its network of United Nations information centres and used social media platforms to increase the reach of the programme and international awareness of the observance. The Department also initiated new partnerships, and developed existing ones further, with Member States and civil society actors, which greatly helped in enhancing awareness of the permanent memorial initiative.

I. Introduction

1. On 17 December 2007, the General Assembly, in its resolution 62/122, designated 25 March the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to collaborate with and build on the work of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), including its Slave Route Project, to establish a programme of educational outreach to inculcate in future generations an understanding of the causes, consequences and lessons of the slave trade and to communicate the dangers of racism and prejudice.

3. In its follow-up resolutions, including resolution 68/7, the General Assembly further requested the Secretary-General to report on continued action to implement the outreach programme and the steps taken to enhance world public awareness of commemorative activities and the permanent memorial initiative.

4. The present report is submitted pursuant to those requests.

II. Background

5. Taking place over a 400-year period, the transatlantic slave trade was the largest forced migration in history. The extensive exodus of Africans to many areas of the world was unprecedented in the annals of recorded human history. The legacy of that migration remains evident today in the large populations of people of African descent living throughout the Americas. In the past few years, efforts have been made to raise public awareness regarding the slave trade and its lasting consequences on societies throughout the world. As part of those efforts, it is essential to recognize the contributions that enslaved people and their descendants have made to the societies that forced them into bondage. The International Decade for People of African Descent, which will start in 2015, will provide an opportunity to showcase those contributions.

III. "Victory over slavery: Haiti and beyond"

6. The theme of the 2014 commemoration, "Victory over slavery: Haiti and beyond," pays tribute to the fight against slavery in nations around the world. Haiti was the first nation to become independent as a result of the struggle of enslaved men and women, led by Toussaint Louverture. It is 210 years since the Republic of Haiti was established on 1 January 1804, and the Haitian insurrection is recognized as a milestone by the liberation movements that fought for the abolition of slavery. The year also marks the twentieth anniversary of the UNESCO Slave Route Project, launched in Ouidah, Benin, in 1994, whereby UNESCO decided to break the silence surrounding the slave trade and slavery. The project has produced multimedia educational materials, available for educators, students and the general public.

7. In order to develop a brand that can be easily recognized, it was decided that the visual theme for the observance in 2014 would be adapted from the visual identity of 2013, featuring a man and a woman breaking their bonds as a symbol of

emancipation and a celebration of freedom. The text accompanying the image was changed to reflect the theme of 2014.

IV. Remembrance activities

8. Working in close collaboration with States members of the Caribbean Community and the African Union, the Department of Public Information organized a series of events which, as agreed with Member States, were spread out more widely throughout the year than had previously been the case. Implementation started in the second half of 2013 and, following the submission of the previous report on 7 August 2013 (A/68/291), a number of activities continued to the end of November. The main objective of the additional activities in 2013 was to help raise greater awareness of the permanent memorial initiative.

Permanent memorial and international design competition

9. The international design competition was concluded over the summer of 2013, with the final judging week taking place at United Nations Headquarters during the last week of August. The seven finalists selected by the international panel of judges were invited to present their projects in person. During that week, the Department organized a screening of the film *Akwantu: The Journey*, attended by director Roy T. Anderson, the panel of judges and the finalists.

10. On 23 September, the Department of Public Information coordinated the unveiling of the winning design. The event took place in the presence of the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, the Director-General of UNESCO, the Prime Minister of Jamaica and the Permanent Representative of Jamaica in his capacity as Chair of the Permanent Memorial Committee. Rodney Leon, an American architect of Haitian descent, who had also designed the African Burial Ground National Monument in downtown Manhattan, won the international design competition with *The Ark of Return*.

11. On 28 November, Mr. Leon and Michael Gomez of New York University, a member of the international panel of judges, presented the winning project during a lunchtime panel discussion.

12. The Department of Public Information supported the judging and the ensuing process by creating several videos, which were screened at the unveiling ceremony and the presentation on 28 November. *The Ark of Return: Lest We Forget*, a video in the *UN in Action* series, was produced in all six official languages.

Commemoration in 2014 of "Victory over slavery: Haiti and beyond"

13. In 2014, in addition to the formal annual observance of the International Day of Remembrance during the week of 25 March, a series of worldwide commemorative activities were planned throughout the year, with at least one event per month from January to July. Events included solemn ceremonies, cultural events, a global student videoconference and panel discussions during the commemorative week, as well as exhibitions and a film festival.

14. With Haiti at the centre of the commemoration in 2014, the first activity took place on 24 January to celebrate Haitian author Dany Laferrière on the occasion of his election to the French Academy in December 2013. Held in French, the cultural

event brought to the United Nations a large audience from the Haitian diaspora who listened to academics and diplomats and saw a short play based on the work of Mr. Laferrière, who also spoke.

15. Through a partnership with the International Organization of la Francophonie, Cameroonian saxophonist and UNESCO Artist for Peace, Manu Dibango, gave a concert as part of the slavery remembrance commemorative activities on 20 March, the International Day of la Francophonie.

Solemn commemorative meeting of the General Assembly

16. The solemn commemorative meeting of the General Assembly was held on the International Day of Remembrance. Remarks were delivered by the President of the General Assembly and representatives of the regional groups and of the host country. A message from the Secretary-General was read out and statements were also made by representatives of individual Member States, including the Minister of Arts and Culture of Cameroon and the Permanent Representatives of Cuba, Haiti, Japan and Spain.

17. Michaëlle Jean, UNESCO Special Envoy for Haiti and a member of the International Scientific Committee of the Slave Route Project, delivered the keynote address. She recalled the role played by Haiti in inspiring other nations to fight for the abolition of slavery:

> From Haiti came the spark that lit the great cauldron of the fight to abolish slavery, particularly in the Americas. Liberty, equality, fraternity — not just for us, Haitian men and women, but for all those in chains, said the President of the young Haitian Republic, Alexandre Pétion, to Simón Bolívar, known as El Libertador, driven from Venezuela and Jamaica in 1815 and given asylum by Pétion.

18. Haitian performer, Emeline Michel, was invited to sing in an informal component of the meeting.

Cultural and culinary event

19. Emeline Michel also performed during the cultural and culinary event on 25 March, which was jointly hosted by the Permanent Missions of Cameroon and Haiti. Cameroonian cuisine was showcased, which had been prepared by chef Emile Engoulou Engoulou, who was flown from Yaoundé to New York by the Ministry of Arts and Culture of Cameroon.

20. Through a partnership with the African Burial Ground National Monument, a theatre performance was presented during the cultural evening. The performance was developed by students from Guinea, Jamaica and Senegal, during a four-day creative workshop conducted at the National Monument.

Global videoconference for students

21. On 26 March, the annual global videoconference brought together 500 students and educators from secondary schools in Haiti, Senegal, Spain and the United States of America. Conducted with simultaneous French and English interpretation, the event was organized with the support of the transatlantic slave trade education project of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network. Sandra Arnold,

founding Director of the Burial Database Project of Enslaved African Americans at Fordham University, moderated the conference.

22. A direct descendent of both Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington, Kenneth B. Morris, founder and President of the Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives, spoke about the influence of his familial ties to slavery and how the current generation could find inspiration from the past. The conference also included remarks by Rodney Leon, who presented the permanent memorial project.

23. The educational value of the videoconference is demonstrated below in a sample of responses to a survey question on the conference: "Please tell us something about the transatlantic slave trade that you did not know before participating in this year's videoconference":

(a) "I learned that most of the rebellion started in Haiti";

(b) "Spain was the first country to participate in the transatlantic trade";

(c) "I did not know about the 'door of no return'";

(d) "I did not know about Spain's involvement in the slave trade";

(e) "The transatlantic slave trade was forgotten and not spoken of for many years";

(f) "At one point in time, New York City was the largest slave-owning city in the United States outside of Richmond";

(g) "I did not know about the way the slaves and slavery in general were really spread out across many regions of the world";

(h) "That the trade lasted for 400 years";

(i) "I did not know that the effects of the Haitian Revolution transcended through other revolutions";

(j) "I did not know about the effects of slavery in Senegal";

(k) "I learned that slavery still exists today in the form of human trafficking and prostitution";

(l) "I did not know about the conditions of the slave ships and that so many slaves committed suicide".

Briefing by the Department of Public Information for non-governmental organizations and panel discussion

24. The briefing for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on the theme "Victory over slavery?" was held on 27 March and broadcast live on United Nations Web TV. Panellists included Kenneth Morris, Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives; Sandra Arnold, Burial Database Project of Enslaved African Americans, Fordham University; and Deborah Willis, Chair of the Department of Photography and Imaging, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University. The briefing was moderated by James Braxton Peterson, Director of Africana Studies, Lehigh University, Pennsylvania. Panellists addressed the question "Are we victorious over slavery?" and the impact of remembering the transatlantic slave trade. During the briefing, the video *The Ark of Return: Lest We Forget* was screened.

Film festival

25. In 2014, the Department of Public Information decided to leverage the outreach power of film as an educational tool and organized a multilingual film festival featuring films related to slavery and its legacy. The Department engaged with a number of partners for the festival, including the African Burial Ground National Monument, the New York African Film Festival, the Bronx Museum of the Arts, and the International Organization of la Francophonie. Screenings and discussions took place at United Nations Headquarters and other venues in New York, with the sponsorship of a number of permanent missions to the United Nations, as well as in a number of United Nations information centres. The films were in a variety of languages, including English, French, Spanish and Wolof, with follow-up discussions in English and French. The list of films includes:

(a) *12 Years a Slave*, shown on 26 February, in the presence of the Secretary-General, followed by a discussion with the British director of the film, Steve McQueen, moderated by Lawrence O'Donnell of MSNBC;

(b) *Toussaint Louverture* by French-Senegalese director Philippe Niang, shown on 8 March at the African Burial Ground National Monument, sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Haiti and the International Organization of la Francophonie;

(c) *Tey*, shown on 18 March, sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Senegal and the International Organization of la Francophonie, followed by a discussion with French-Senegalese director of the film, Alain Gomis, and lead actors Saul Williams and Anisia Uzeyman, moderated by Michael Ralph, Department of Social and Cultural Analysis, New York University;

(d) *Belle*, shown on 2 April, sponsored by the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, followed by a discussion with British director of the film, Amma Asante, and lead actress Gugu Mbatha-Raw, moderated by T. J. Holmes of MSNBC;

(e) *Sarraounia*, by Mauritanian director Med Hondo shown on 13 May at Lincoln Center, in New York, in partnership with the New York African Film Festival;

(f) *Coeur de Lion*, by director Boubakar Diallo of Burkina Faso, shown on 14 May, sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Burkina Faso in partnership with the International Organization of la Francophonie and the New York African Film Festival, followed by a discussion with lead actor Mahamadi Nana, Mamadou Diouf of Columbia University and film critic Zeba Blay of the Huffington Post. Also screened in Antananarivo, Brazzaville, Bujumbura, Ouagadougou and Tunis;

(g) *They Are We*, by Australian director Emma Christopher, shown on 11 July at Joyce Kilmer Park, New York, in partnership with the New York African Film Festival and the Bronx Museum of the Arts;

(h) *Akwantu: The Journey*, by Jamaican-American director Roy Anderson, shown at United Nations information centres and offices in Accra, Dar es Salaam, Harare, Lagos, Minsk and Yerevan.

Exhibition

26. The exhibition "Victory over slavery: Haiti and beyond" opened in mid-June and had its media launch on 27 June, during which the Permanent Representatives of Haiti and Jamaica and Rodney Leon delivered remarks. Hosted by the Permanent Missions of Haiti and Jamaica, the high-level official opening took place on 10 July, during which the Secretary-General, the Director-General of UNESCO, the Permanent Representatives of Haiti and Jamaica and the Permanent Observer of the African Union delivered remarks. The exhibition remained on display until 14 September.

27. With an overview of the transatlantic slave trade as a backdrop, the exhibition focused on the struggle of slaves for independence in Haiti and the establishment of the Republic in 1804. The design of the permanent memorial to honour the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, *The Ark of Return* by Rodney Leon, was showcased. The UNESCO Slave Route Project was also featured, with panels recording sites of memory and a display of educational publications. Sergio Leyva Seiglie's photographs of the documentary film *They Are We* provided an additional component, illustrating the theme of the return.

Twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project

28. Two events will be organized in September at United Nations Headquarters by the Department of Public Information in partnership with UNESCO to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project, in addition to the anniversary being featured in the exhibition.. On 4 September, the first event will consist of a round-table discussion on the representation of slavery in film, a follow-up to a UNESCO round table on the same topic which was held in Zanzibar in 2006. Film scholars and representatives of the movie industry will take part in the discussion.

29. The second event, on 5 September, will consist of a panel discussion for educators. The UNESCO publication, *The Transatlantic Slave Trade and Slavery: New Directions in Teaching and Learning* (2013), will provide the background for the discussion. The two editors of the publication will discuss the psychological consequences of the slave trade and slavery and share with the educators in attendance their experiences of teaching about the slave trade and slavery.

Outreach through United Nations information centres in collaboration with civil society organizations and Member States

30. An increased number of United Nations information centres, services and offices around the world took part in the programme in 2014. In total, 20 members of the network organized activities, representing an increase of 25 per cent over 2013. Educational outreach activities to raise awareness of the programme were organized in collaboration with local partners, including host Governments, media, civil society, youth associations and academic and cultural institutions.

31. Through an innovative approach, in the context of the film festival, 11 United Nations information centres were grouped together to organize remote discussions on two films related to slavery, for which the "Remember slavery" programme had negotiated the screening rights. Following the screening, students held a videoconference exchange across duty stations about what they had learned from the film. That interaction allowed them to compare their understanding of slavery and

the transatlantic slave trade. *Akwantu: The Journey* was presented in English and the following United Nations information centres organized discussions: Accra and Dar es Salaam on 24 March; Minsk and Yerevan on 28 March (discussion also in Russian); and Harare and Lagos on 1 April. *Coeur de Lion* was presented in French and remote discussions took place as follows: Brazzaville, Ouagadougou, and Tunis on 31 March; and Antananarivo and Bujumbura on 2 April.

32. Other activities undertaken by United Nations information centres for the commemoration included the following:

(a) On 25 March, the United Nations information centre in Accra organized an educative tour of several slave sites in Salaga in the East Gonja district in northern Ghana for selected students of three senior high schools in the area. The tour brought together 200 participants, including 130 students and representatives from local government, the media, museums and monuments in Ghana. It also provided an opportunity for them to increase their understanding of the link between slavery in West Africa and the Caribbean. A brief exchange between students and officials concluded the tour;

(b) On 25 and 26 March, the United Nations information centre in Antananarivo organized several screenings of *The Ark of Return: Lest We Forget* and *Coeur de Lion*, followed by presentations on slavery, for students and members of United Nations clubs. On 3 April, a conference-debate took place at the Centre malgache pour le développement de la lecture publique et de l'animation culturelle, which included an opening ceremony, dance performances, skits and a panel discussion on slavery;

(c) On 24 April, the United Nations information centre in Brazzaville carried out an educational outreach event in Pointe Noire, close to the site of an ancient slave trading post. Over 300 high-school students from public and private schools took part in the event. A screening of the UNESCO documentary *Slave Routes: a Global Vision* was followed by a briefing on the causes, consequences and impact of slavery and its new forms around the world. "We learned a lot from this debate" young people said, stressing intolerance, racism, profit and poverty among the issues of concern;

(d) The Greece desk at the United Nations regional information centre in Brussels created a Greek webpage on the International Day of Remembrance, featuring the message from the Secretary-General, general information about the abolition of slavery and visuals. The page was promoted through the Greek version of the centre's Facebook page between 22 and 29 March and more than 600,000 users saw the campaign;

(e) Having facilitated the participation of Senegalese students in a global student videoconference in partnership with the UNESCO regional office in Dakar on 26 March, the United Nations information centre in Dakar organized other commemorative events in partnership with the Lycée Cheikh Omar Foutiyou Tall and the city of Saint-Louis. On 16 April, high-school students hosted a one-hour radio show on slavery, broadcast live on *Radio Municipale Dakar*. On 17 April, a screening of *Slave Routes: a Global Vision* was presented to over 300 students and teachers and representatives of the Mayor of Saint-Louis, the Minister of National Education and the United Nations information centre. Other activities included a

march through the city of Saint-Louis by 500 students and a rap concert hosted by singer Alassane Doro Djigo, alias PimPlas;

(f) On 25 March, the United Nations Information Centre in Dhaka, ASA University Bangladesh and Daffodil International University held jointly organized activities, which included a seminar, a poetry recital, a drama performance and a candle-lighting ceremony, with a poster exhibition on display throughout the day. More than 200 students and teachers attended the events;

(g) On 25 March, the United Nations Information Service in Geneva organized a screening of *Coeur de Lion*. On 14 May, the Service partnered with the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies to launch Ciné-ONU Geneva with the screening of *12 Years a Slave* at the Maison de la Paix. The Acting Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva and the Director of the Institute delivered remarks. The screening was attended by 600 spectators and followed by a debate on the theme of slavery with a representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and a professor from the Graduate Institute;

(h) On 11 April, for the first time, the United Nations information centre in Jakarta took part in the commemoration, with a film screening and a discussion organized in partnership with Parahyangan Catholic University and UNESCO. Following the screening of a trailer for *12 Years a Slave* and the UNESCO documentary, *Slave Route: the Soul of Resistance*, senior officials took part in a discussion. Attended by 100 participants from academia, the diplomatic community and national media, the event took place in the building that most represents solidarity between Asian and African nations: the Gedung Konferensi Asia-Africa, home to the conference in Bandung, Indonesia, in 1955 that gave birth to the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries;

(i) On 1 April, the United Nations information centre in Lagos, Nigeria, organized an awareness rally, with dances and anti-slavery songs, followed by a screening of *Akwantu: The Journey*. The Executive Director of the African Anti-Slavery Coalition delivered a keynote address on the history of the slave trade. The Centre also developed outreach material based on the visual identity for 2014 to help raise awareness of the International Day of Remembrance;

(j) The United Nations information centre in Lusaka commemorated the International Day of Remembrance through a social media campaign conducted over a two-day period on 24 and 25 March. Over 4,000 people were reached via bulk SMS texts around the country and Facebook and Twitter were also used to disseminate the information. In addition, 500 sticker flyers were distributed to the general public;

(k) On 25 March the United Nations office in Minsk, in partnership with International University "MITSO", held a round-table discussion on the issue of slavery and human trafficking in the presence of the First Vice-Rector of the university and international law students. Another joint initiative was a creative writing contest for high-school students on the subject "1,000 words against slavery", with the award ceremony taking place at the university on 17 April. Both events were widely covered by the Belarusian media;

(l) During the period from 25 to 31 March, the United Nations information centre in Ouagadougou organized an exhibit of photographs, posters, books,

brochures and legal texts, which was seen by over 5,000 students, government officials, parliamentarians and representatives of civil society and the media. In partnership with the Association of History Teachers of Burkina Faso, the information centre also hosted lectures on the theme "The transatlantic slave trade and racism" which benefitted some 4,000 students;

(m) On 24 March, together with the UNESCO cluster office for the Maghreb and the Mohammed V University-Agdal, the United Nation information centre in Rabat hosted a conference on the theme of "Slavery to the proof of time", in which 100 students and teachers took part. Following an opening session with four university professors, a screening of the UNESCO documentary *Slave Routes: a Global Vision* led to a discussion between the speakers and the audience, who shared reflections and proposals, including a draft declaration against slavery prepared by the students. The conference concluded with a beating of the drums. An afternoon event at the Lycée Hassan II brought together 30 high-school students who took part in a drawing and painting competition on the theme of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, while another group of students attended an information session. The events were covered by a number of national media;

(n) The United Nations information centre in Rio de Janeiro partnered with the Federal Museum of Justice to organize an exhibition which opened to the public on 14 May in Rio de Janeiro. The exhibition included materials from the travelling United Nations exhibition, *Forever Free*, translated into Portuguese under the supervision of the information centre, paintings from the collections of the Museu do Negro and ancient catalogues used to register slave purchases and sales in Brazil. The free admission exhibition will remain on display until the end of September, when it will be transferred to the city of Niterói. The opening ceremony featured the UNESCO film *Slave Route: the Soul of Resistance*, which had also been translated into Portuguese by the information centre, and a round table on the theme of "The law and the Afro-descendants: from the abolition to affirmative action";

(o) On 28 March, the United Nations office in Tbilisi, in cooperation with the European Law Students' Association Georgia, organized a youth conference on the theme of "Zero discrimination". *Slave Routes: a Global Vision* was viewed by 70 law students from universities based in Tbilisi and the National Defence Academy of Georgia;

(p) On 25 March, the United Nations office in Yerevan partnered with Yerevan State University, host to the first United Nations depository library in Armenia, to organize a discussion with law students on the issue of slavery. On 31 March, an information-sharing event on transatlantic slave trade and human trafficking issues took place with the coordinators of school networks/NGOs and representatives of United Nations Corners. To support those activities, the message of the Secretary-General for the International Day of Remembrance, information materials and a video clip entitled "United Nations honours heroes and survivors of the transatlantic slave trade" were translated into Armenian and are available on the website of the office.

V. Information outreach and resources

33. The interest generated by the 2014 theme and film festival afforded a unique opportunity to enhance world public awareness of the importance of the slave trade, the role of the Haitian Revolution in the abolitionist movements, the UNESCO Slave Route Project sites of memory and the permanent memorial initiative. The commemorative activities benefited from improved coverage worldwide through traditional and social media channels, thanks to the involvement of a number of celebrities and increased partnerships.

34. To support the programme of activities in 2014, the Department of Public Information developed outreach products, such as regularly updated flyers, posters, banners, bookmarks, pins, folders, press kits and postcards, depicting the theme "Remember slavery". The poster was created and made available in digital format in all six official languages of the United Nations and in Haitian Creole, Kiswahili and Portuguese.

35. Through its multimedia services, the Department also facilitated coverage of all the events that took place. Key activities were announced at the noon briefing by the United Nations spokesperson and images were made available to television stations and print media worldwide. United Nations Photo, United Nations Television and Video, United Nations Web TV, UNifeed and the United Nations News Centre regularly covered the events. Programmes included interviews with key speakers participating in the activities and videos and feature stories were produced on the permanent memorial, the film festival and official commemorations. United Nations Radio also reported on the activities in all six official languages and in Kiswahili and Portuguese.

36. In addition, media outreach was increased with the support of the Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit of the Department of Public Information, which provided services to journalists reporting on the events and disseminated press releases and media alerts. As a result, interviews, photos and stories were featured by international news agencies and media outlets, including ARD Germany, Associated Press, BBC Africa, China Central Television Africa, CBC Radio-Canada, CNN, Europa News Wire, France 24, Fuji Television, Inter Press Service, Italian news agency ANSA, Nuestra Tele Noticias, Pan-African News Agency, The Root, South-South News, United Press International, WBAI and Xinhua.

37. The issue of slavery was also widely echoed in local, traditional and social media worldwide reporting on the activities organized at Headquarters and by the information centres. During his visit to Headquarters, Steve McQueen was also interviewed by student reporters from the Harlem Children's Zone (New York).

38. The International Day of Remembrance and remembrance activities were promoted through Facebook (facebook.com/remembersslavery) and Twitter (@remembersslavery) and through the main United Nations accounts. Photos of the activities were posted on Flickr and videos on YouTube. Those accounts have remained active throughout 2014 to keep the audience engaged and to increase traffic, and were listed in all outreach products and promoted through the social media accounts of the United Nations and its partners.

39. The Department of Public Information updated the website of the programme in the six official languages to facilitate global access to the activities of the

commemorative programme. The site provides educational resources on the transatlantic slave trade, with links to the message of the Secretary-General, background information and links to videos and partner websites including the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project and the permanent memorial.

40. To help raise staff awareness of the programme, articles were featured on iSeek and the Secretariat intranet and a number of outreach products were distributed. The increased number of events allowed staff to participate more actively.

VI. Activities by Member States

41. In response to the request in paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 68/7, Member States provided information about their national educational programmes designed to educate and inculcate in future generations an understanding of the lessons, history and consequences of slavery and the slave trade. The contributions received by the Secretariat in 2014 are summarized below.

42. In Cameroon, history programmes at the primary and secondary levels include a full curriculum on slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, both for the English- and French-speaking educational subsystems. At the primary level, the curriculum covers the following topics: slavery in Cameroon; the origin of the slave trade; methods of the slave trade (domestic, trans-Africa and Atlantic routes); the abolition of the slave trade; reasons for buying and selling slaves; and the economic, social and demographic consequences of slavery and the slave trade. The secondary programme explores the same topics in greater depth and includes a specific course on relations between Africa and Europe, the evolution of the trade routes and trading posts and the beginnings of the triangular trade. The goal of the programme is for students to acquire a better understanding of national and international historical developments and of the evolution of society from a social, cultural, political and economic perspective.

43. In accordance with national legislation, the school curriculum at the elementary school level in Denmark requires students of history to generate an understanding of the history and consequences of slavery and the slave trade. The national history curriculum contains a mandatory canon of 29 historical events, including the abolition of the slave trade. The mandatory curriculum at the upper secondary education level also includes intercultural skills; European colonization and the role of Denmark in that process; human rights and peace, including the importance of legal systems; and the acquisition of knowledge of relations between the Western cultural sphere and the rest of the world and of knowledge of cultural clashes from ancient times to the present globalized world.

44. For several years, the National Museum in Copenhagen has focused on the themes of slavery and the slave trade for educational purposes. Every year a large number of primary and secondary level students visit the National Museum to learn about the Danish slave trade from 1660 to 1802. The National Museum invites students on a journey through its ethnographic collections, including those from Africa, to the Danish collections, which exhibit artefacts from the Danish colonies in the West Indies, where slaves were transported. The primary educational focus is the historic slave trade, but perspectives on modern slavery and human rights are

also introduced. The Museum has also published educational material for teaching on the subjects of the slave trade and slavery.

45. Eighteen Danish schools are linked to the transatlantic slave trade project of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network. As a result, teaching in that area includes student exchanges and direct confrontation with cultures that have been colonized in the past. For 10 years, the Danish Associated Schools Project Network has worked on the development and dissemination of teaching materials on the transatlantic slave trade via its website, where the materials are publicly available from www.unesco-asp.dk. There has, therefore, been an increase in the use of teaching materials on the topic in schools, such as the 12 court cases from the Danish West Indies which took place between 1822 and 1844, which depict different aspects of life as a slave.

46. In the Finnish school system, slavery, the transatlantic slave trade and the consequences thereof are taught as part of compulsory history studies in 7th grade (lower secondary, 13-year olds) and at the upper secondary level (17-year olds). All textbooks used contain wide-ranging information about the causes, consequences and legacy of the transatlantic slave trade from both the micro- and macrohistorical perspectives. The dangers of racism and prejudice are also featured prominently in history classes and the mandatory social studies/citizenship education classes. A citation of chapter 2.1 on the underlying values of basic education of the Finnish national core curriculum from 2011 reads:

> The first paragraph of this chapter is amended as follows:
>
> The underlying values of basic education are human rights, equality, democracy, natural diversity, preservation of environmental viability, and the endorsement of multiculturalism. Key documents defining human rights are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child of the United Nations and the European Convention on Human Rights. Basic education promotes responsibility, a sense of community, and respect for the rights and freedoms of the individual.

47. The Government of Kenya has mandated teaching about slavery and the slave trade in its education curriculum to enable students to understand the issue and its consequences. In the primary school syllabus, the subject is taught at class level Standard 6 and 7, with topics on political developments and systems, including the effects of early visitors to eastern Africa and the scramble for and partition of eastern Africa (reasons for the coming of the Europeans). For the secondary school curriculum, the subject is taught under three topics: "Form I": contact between East Africa and the outside world; "Form II": trade; and "Form III": the European colonization of Africa. The Ministry of Education has recommended to curriculum developers that they strengthen the study of the issue of slavery and the slave trade by formulating appropriate objectives during the upcoming curriculum review.

48. Luxembourg reported that slavery and the slave trade are part of the curriculum at the secondary education level, both for the general and technical tracks. For the general track, topics include the transatlantic slave trade in the context of European colonization of the Americas; emancipation in the context of the French Revolution and the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen; and colonialism. The technical track includes the transatlantic slave trade in

the context of the history of the United States, colonization and human and civil rights as part of civic education.

49. The Ministry of Culture and Heritage of Senegal indicated that, with the island of Gorée on the UNESCO World Heritage list, Senegal had a responsibility to teach young people about the history and legacy of slavery. The Ministry of Education has developed a curriculum concerning the history of slavery and the slave trade for secondary school students, which includes a mandatory field visit to and/or a school project about the House of Slaves on the island of Gorée. The lower secondary level curriculum covers the slave trade and its consequences in Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe; the slave trade in Senegal; and the abolitionist movements. The upper secondary level curriculum includes the Arab slave trade, the transatlantic slave trade and the slave trade in Senegal. Senegalese schools that are members of the transatlantic slave trade project of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network take part in activities to commemorate the victims of the slave trade and the abolition of slavery, including on the International Days related to slavery: 25 March, 23 August and 2 December.

50. The United States reported that, as a multicultural society, it remained committed to fighting racism, safeguarding the dignity of people regardless of race or background and countering the hateful legacy of slavery. The study of slavery and the slave trade is covered in school curricula throughout the United States, as an important part of the history of the American people. Under its federalist system of government, education in the United States is primarily the responsibility of state and local governments. States and local communities, as well as public and private organizations of all kinds, establish schools and colleges, develop curricula and determine requirements for enrolment and graduation.

51. In addition to the prescribed curricula in schools across the country, supplemental resources and information about the history, consequences and lessons of slavery are widely available. For example, the Department of Education administers the Underground Railroad Educational and Cultural Program, which provides grants to non-profit educational organizations established to "research, display, interpret and collect artefacts relating to the Underground Railroad." The funded projects all address slavery and the Underground Railroad itself. Information about the programme and the grants is available from www2.ed.gov/programs/ugroundrr/index.html. The Library of Congress, the National Archives and other institutions have a wide array of resources available for teachers, including websites such as www.africanamericanhistorymonth.gov/teachers.html, which are readily available to students and others interested in further study about slavery.

Activities submitted in 2013 and revalidated in 2014

52. Jamaica has continued its policies and programmes to highlight the role of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade in moulding Jamaican culture and society. Its efforts have centred on educating the public about the horrors of slavery, the struggle against slavery, the legacy of slavery and the connections to modern Jamaican society. At the same time, most programmes and activities have been organized to celebrate the struggle and victory of Jamaicans over the system of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, in addition to the colonial legacy.

VII. Contribution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to the programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade

Slave route: resistance, liberty and heritage

53. In the new directions and prospects adopted for the project by UNESCO member States in 2012, a holistic and inclusive approach and innovative lines of action positioning the flagship programme at the heart of UNESCO intersectoral actions were proposed: the preservation of tangible and intangible heritage; the promotion of cultural diversity, museums and memory of the world; the fight against racism and discrimination; and the promotion of intercultural dialogue. In order to mobilize collaboration and partnerships with strategic partners to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project, a series of high-visibility activities have been undertaken. The significant results of the project over 20 years at different levels demonstrate, from a cultural, social, educational and policy perspective, the timeliness and relevance of the project in the promotion of mutual understanding, reconciliation and intercultural dialogue, which are major concerns for modern societies today. Activities carried out under the project since the submission of the previous report are outlined below.

Scientific research

54. In the increasing amount of literature produced on the slave trade and slavery in recent years, there have been calls for the preparation of a reference document on the main aspects of the slave trade and slavery in the various regions concerned. That document, prepared with contributions from members of the International Scientific Committee for the project in their respective areas of expertise, was finalized and progressively posted on the website of the project. Those contributions are dedicated to students, researchers and teachers, particularly to help them in the elaboration of pedagogical content on the slave trade and slavery. The project is also supporting new research and publications on issues that are little addressed, in particular in neglected regions (e.g. the Middle East and Asia).

Development of teaching and awareness-raising materials

55. The Slave Route Project has further contributed to identifying new educational approaches and the teaching of slavery and the slave trade at various educational levels. Through the project, support has also been given to specific initiatives to develop teaching materials, including in Brazil, Canada, France and Saint Kitts and Nevis. In cooperation with the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network, the film entitled, *Slave Trade: the Soul of Resistance*, which targets young people, was widely disseminated and discussed on different occasions at schools in Barbados, Canada, France (including Guadeloupe) and Kenya and presented on French television.

56. As part of the commemoration of the International Day of Remembrance in 2014, the Slave Route Project cooperated closely with the Department of Public Information to organize a series of activities in different countries, particularly in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

Contribution to the preparation of the programme of action for the Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024)

57. Representatives of the Slave Route Project took part in various meetings organized in Geneva by OHCHR to propose concrete actions that could foster the knowledge and recognition of the contributions of enslaved Africans to the construction of modern societies. That includes proposals on new approaches to teaching and learning about the slave trade and slavery; on effective policies to introduce the issue into national narratives; on research programmes to enhance the study of the subject at universities; and on methodologies to inventory, preserve and promote sites of memory.

Development of sites of memory

58. UNESCO took an active part in the designation of the laureate of the international competition to build a permanent memorial at the United Nations to honour the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. The Director-General of UNESCO took part in the unveiling ceremony on 23 September 2013 at United Nations Headquarters.

59. UNESCO is finalizing a conceptual and methodological capacity-building guide for managers of sites and places of memory, which will encourage cultural tourism around historical sites related to the slave trade and slavery and contribute to local sustainable development. To that end, a meeting of managers of sites of memory was held in Williamsburg, Virginia, in partnership with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, to discuss the modalities of an international network of managers. Within the framework of the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project, UNESCO has also created a new commemorative plaque bearing the words "The slave route: resistance, liberty, history and heritage, site of memory associated with the UNESCO slave route" to encourage Member States and partners to put in place itineraries of memory recognized by UNESCO that could be used as tools for education and "memory tourism".

Celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project (1994-2014)

60. Activities have been undertaken worldwide to encourage Member States and partners to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project and celebrate its significant results. The project has had a considerable impact at local, national, regional, interregional and international levels and has helped to change attitudes globally. It has contributed substantially to fostering greater awareness of the ethical, political, socioeconomic and cultural dimensions of that history and memory. A comprehensive list of activities planned worldwide by various partners has been posted on the website of the project and a special logo has been designed for the anniversary and shared with interested partners.

61. UNESCO is preparing an important event at its Headquarters on 10 September 2014 to mark the anniversary. The event will bring together high-level political, intellectual and artistic personalities from different regions of the world to renew their support and commitment for this interregional and multidisciplinary project. Participants will include the former President of Cabo Verde, Pedro Pires, the UNESCO Special Envoy for Haiti, famous jazz musician Marcus Miller and the Vice-Chancellor of the University of the West Indies. The Director-General of

UNESCO will open an exhibition entitled "Africans in India: from slavery to generals and rulers".

VIII. Partnerships

62. Through the consolidation of existing partnerships and the establishment of new ones, the Department of Public Information has managed to boost the outreach of the programme significantly. Those partnerships have increased the scope of activities and the visibility of the programme, engaging new audiences and fostering the expansion of networks.

63. The collaboration with the African Burial Ground National Monument and the memorial to the abolition of slavery in Nantes, France, have helped to raise awareness of sites of memory. Both were featured in the exhibition "Victory over slavery: Haiti and beyond"., which was also supported by architect Rodney Leon. A large part of the exhibition was dedicated to the design of the United Nations permanent memorial. A special connection has been established with the African Burial Ground National Monument, which was also designed by Rodney Leon. In addition to the joint screening of the movie *Toussaint Louverture* and the student theatre workshop featured at the cultural and culinary event, the National Monument has also added the *The Ark of Return: Lest We Forget* to its video screenings for visitors.

64. The activities organized jointly with the International Organization of la Francophonie allowed the Department to highlight African cultural heritage through the Manu Dibango concert and through screening African films, such as *Tey* and *Coeur de Lion*. The partnership with the "Remember slavery" programme has been prominently featured in all outreach materials of the International Organization of la Francophonie, targeting the French-speaking community in New York.

65. Partnering with the New York African Film Festival was of particular relevance and helped engagement with largely African and African-American audiences. In addition to the "Remember slavery" programme being presented at the screenings at Lincoln Center and Joyce Kilmer Park, the joint screening of *Coeur de Lion* brought the New York African Film Festival audience to the United Nations. The outreach print products of the festival featured a description of the "Remember slavery" programme, including its visual identity, and were disseminated to 18,000 people, while email communications also featured the partnership.

66. With the support of the Creative Community Outreach Initiative, the Department also expanded its partnerships with the film industry. Following the successful screening of *12 Years A Slave* at the United Nations only days before it won best picture at the Academy Awards, the production company Fox Searchlight Pictures agreed to screen the film *Belle* at the United Nations before its official release. The participation of actors and directors in most of the screenings resulted in a better awareness of the programme in the creative community. The Department also reached out to smaller production companies and negotiated screening rights for the United Nations information centres for *Coeur de Lion* and *Akwantu*.

67. Partnerships with cultural and research institutions, schools, colleges and other educational entities worldwide were further developed. Events were organized with the support of, or with representatives from, for example, the Bronx Museum of the

Arts, California State University, Columbia University, the Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives, Fordham University, New York University, the National Park Services, the University of Sydney in Australia and York University in Canada.

68. The active engagement of Member States also increased in supporting the many events that were offered, resulting in improved attendance, the participation of diasporas and coverage by national media. In addition to the Permanent Mission of Haiti, which provided strong support to the activities, the Permanent Missions of Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Jamaica, Senegal and the United Kingdom, as well as the African Union and the Permanent Memorial Committee sponsored or co-hosted a number of events.

IX. Future activities

69. In 2015, the Department of Public Information will continue to collaborate closely with Member States to promote the annual observance of the International Day of Remembrance, the remembrance programme and the permanent memorial initiative.

70. Building on the positive momentum gained in 2014, it will continue to organize events throughout the year. The year-long activities make for better opportunities for outreach and partnerships, for planning events more effectively within existing resources and for creating a sustained and impactful educational programme.

71. The early adoption of a theme for the commemoration in 2014 proved to be an advantage. It allowed for timely planning for the development of the programme and helped to secure the participation of speakers. Based on that experience, the theme for 2015, "Women and slavery", was adopted by the end of June, with the concurrence of States members of the Caribbean Community and the African Union. In the context of the 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the theme for 2015 will allow the role of women in preserving and passing on the cultural heritage to be explored. Activities will also be designed to support the promotion of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

72. The Department will explore opportunities to increase outreach and education efforts, working closely with the network of United Nations information centres. Based on the proven success of using film to reach out more widely, it will negotiate screening rights with film directors and production companies to offer additional titles for educational screenings. The collaboration with the UNESCO Slave Route Project will be further strengthened.

73. The Department will also continue to support efforts to raise awareness of the permanent memorial initiative, in cooperation with States members of the Caribbean Community and the African Union, in particular in the context of the ground-breaking ceremony currently scheduled for the first quarter of 2015.

74. Consolidating existing partnerships, exploring additional ones and broadening the network of engaged stakeholders will allow for further expansion of the scope of activities and outreach to a broader audience. The Department will dedicate special attention to strengthening the involvement of academics and institutions of learning in the programme, in order to fulfil its educational mandate.